

October 9, 2026



Invitation Membership Renewal

Dear Bethel,

Over the past few years, our Council has prayerfully reflected on what it means to belong at Bethel. Through this time, we have been reminded of our shared calling, our shared faith and our shared witness as a church. Following much prayer and with humble trust, we would like to invite our Bethel church family to a process of membership renewal.

We believe that we have a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with the purpose of the church, a family on mission with God. Truthfully, many churches today, not just our own, struggle with how to follow Jesus in community while seeking the kingdom of God. Church life and its rhythms have evolved over the past few decades. Yet what remains the same is the centrality of Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit who guides us in faithfulness.

As I sat with some potential new members Wednesday night at our Discover Bethel class, I was reminded of the blessing that takes place when we review and remember our history, mission, vision and values as a church. As we looked back at the history of Bethel's since its beginning, I saw God's undeniable hand directing Bethel towards a sacrificial posture around the Bannerman neighbourhood, a commitment to authentic relationships and a zeal for sharing the gospel. Through the years, Bethel has embraced the call to build a house of belonging (Ephesians 2:19-22) with God as the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16). In the years to come, we are committed to the same path.

As a Christian Reformed Church, we value our denominational family. However, Bethel has always embraced a unique calling of welcoming followers of Jesus from a variety of traditions. We have leaned into this as a kingdom opportunity, making us less traditionally CRC, but also enabling us to be missionally minded.

Our approach to membership reflects this commitment. Rather than requiring members to agree with every aspect of Reformed teaching, Bethel invites its members to affirm a shared Christian faith, expressed through the historic creeds of the Church, summarized in a statement of faith, and to embrace practices in our community explained in our membership covenant. Our unity comes first and foremost from Jesus Christ.

Invitation to Renew Our Commitment

Whether you became a member recently or several decades ago, we invite you to reflect with us on what it means to belong to Bethel and participate in God's mission together. Over the next six weeks, you can participate in this process in the following ways:

- **Reflect** on Bethel's Membership Covenant and Statement of Faith
- **Connect** by attending one of our *What We Believe* sessions
 - Two sessions are scheduled during the evening on October 25 and November 4. These will include a brief presentation, followed by time for questions.
- **Engage** in the conversation with our pastors, elders and deacons
 - We are available to listen and discuss this process and membership.
- **Commit and Celebrate** by considering a reaffirmation of your membership on Sunday, November 22, 2026

This invitation is entirely voluntary. Participation in the renewal process is not mandatory, and choosing to not participate in the process will in no way affect or change one's membership status at Bethel.

Our hope, by following God's lead in this process, is to create an opportunity for us to deepen our commitment to faith and belonging at Bethel.

If you have any questions about the membership renewal process, please let us know. One way to start the conversation is by sending an email to the [Governing Elders](#) or [me](#).

One last thought

It was a joy to preach on God's vision of the Church from Ephesians a few weeks ago: "And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." (Ephesians 2:22)

In Christ, we are being built to house the presence of God in this world. This is why we are united under the mission of *becoming like Christ and sharing him with others*. Excitingly, this means God's process of restoration and transformation continues, each and every day. Our prayer is that this season of renewal will strengthen, encourage and focus us so that we can better participate with God in his mission.

On Behalf of Bethel's Council, and as a fellow Bethel member,

Grace and peace,
Pastor Cris

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